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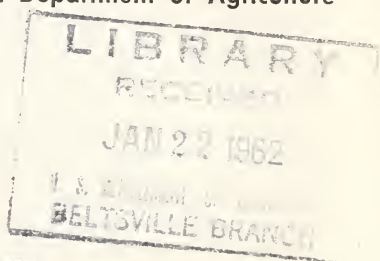
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Agricultural Situation

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THE 1961 CROP YEAR NEARLY BROKE THE RECORD

The 1961 season, just over, was a good one—nearly breaking the record output of 1960.

The big 105 page "Annual Crop Summary" for 1961, issued at exactly 3 p.m. on December 15, told the story in words and figures.

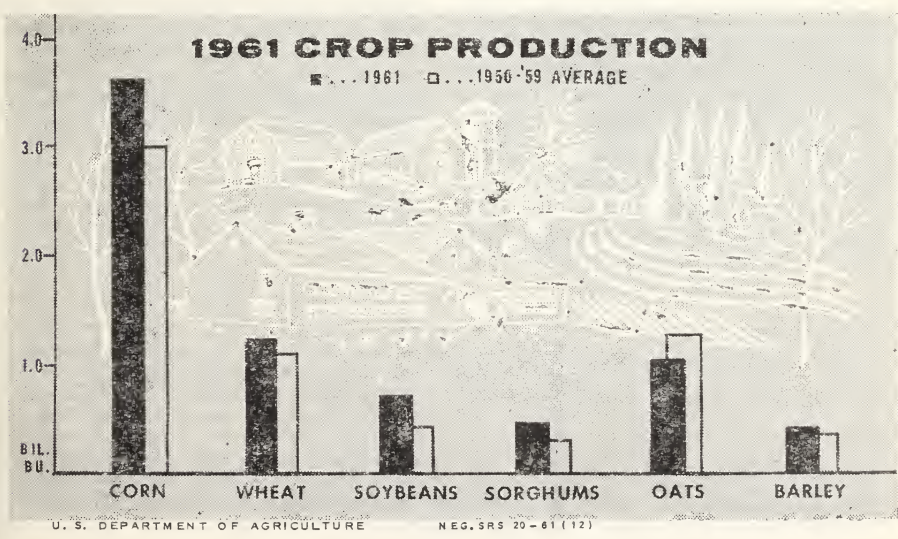
Here are some of the highlights:

Total crop production was 2 percent below 1960, caused largely by the

smallest planted acreage in nearly 50 years and just a wee bit more than the smallest harvested acreage of record.

Farmers planted 310 million acres in 1961, nearly 5 percent less than in 1960. They harvested about 296 million acres, just over the record low of 295 million in the drouth year of 1934.

But yields per acre for most crops were fantastic. Record yields per acre



were made for corn for grain, corn silage, grain sorghum, soybeans, popcorn, dry beans and clover hay. Yields for crops like alfalfa hay, all hay, and peanuts were second highest of record, and the winter wheat and rice yield was third highest of record.

The 1961 season got off to an early start across the Southern part of the Nation, but was delayed by heavy rains in April and May. By July 1 crops were a week or more late east of the Mississippi.

The Northern Plains had a bad time. Moisture reserves and spring rains were scarce. Then, later, high temperatures damaged crops. The season never caught up, and crop output in this big area was cut sharply.

The West had some troubles too—low water supplies and high summer temperatures. Hurricane "Carla" hit from Texas northward, damaging some maturing crops. "Esther" struck the East Coast but did more good than harm.

Frost held off later than usual, permitting most crops to mature without damage, but November rains and snow slowed harvest of late maturing crops.

The combined tonnage of the "big four" feed grain crops—corn, grain sorghum, barley and oats—was 10 percent below 1960. Production of each of the four was below 1960. The 1961 Feed Grain Program was largely responsible for an 18-percent drop in corn for grain acreage and a 29-percent drop in grain sorghum acreage.

The yield per acre of corn was 61.8 bushels, a phenomenal 7.3 bushel increase over 1960. Grain sorghum made a record 43.8 bushels per acre, a jump of 4 bushels over 1960. Oats and bar-

ley yielded well in 1961 but below 1960.

Food grain tonnage in 1961 was 9 percent below 1960 but still 12 percent above average. Each of the food grains—wheat, rye, and rice—produced less in 1961 than in 1960.

Oilseed production was up sharply, with soybeans the star performer—25 percent above 1960. The record soybean crop was due to 16 percent more acreage and a record yield of 25.3 bushels per acre. Cottonseed production was up nearly 1 percent, but the peanut crop was 1 percent below 1960. Flaxseed production was down sharply.

Tobacco was up 4 percent, and sugar beet production set a new high of 18 million tons.

Dry beans and popcorn made excellent showings. The dry bean crop was record high, and popcorn was the second highest of record.

Seed crop production was down from 1960. Hay, pasture, turf, and winter cover crop seed production was 8 percent below 1960, while hay and pasture legume seeds were 13 percent below 1960.

The 1961 crop of noncitrus fruit was 8 percent larger than in 1960, but production of edible nuts was record high in 1961.

Citrus production for the 1961-62 season is up 9 percent from a year earlier. Fresh vegetable production was 4 percent below 1960, and processing vegetable production was 11 percent above a year earlier. Potatoes were 13 percent more in 1961 than in 1960, but sweetpotatoes were 2 percent below 1960.

That's the story for 1961, and thanks to all you crop reporters for your help.

Charles E. Burkhead
Statistical Reporting Service

The Agricultural Situation is sent free to crop, livestock, and price reporters in connection with their reporting work.

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SPRING SIGNUP FOR WHEAT AND FEED GRAIN PROGRAMS

The signup period for 1962-crop corn and grain sorghum and spring-planted 1962-crop wheat and barley under the 1962 wheat stabilization and feed grain programs will begin February 5 and run through March 30.

Under these programs, farmers are able to help bring production into line with needs through diverting wheat and feed grain acreage to soil conserving uses. Fall-seeded wheat and barley acreage was signed up under the two programs during a signup period which ended December 1.

USDA officials point out that the earlier signup dates will give farmers and the industries that serve them an opportunity to make early plans for the coming crop year.

The provisions of the 1962 feed grain program are generally the same as those for 1961. The main points are:

- Voluntary participation.
- Acreage diversion. Not less than 20 percent of the base acreage (1959-60 average) as adjusted can be signed up. Additional acreages can be diverted.
- Payments "in-kind" based on yields and support prices will be made on acreage diverted from feed grains to soil conserving uses.
- Advance payments.
- Price support for cooperators on the normal production of acreages planted to feed grains. Levels of support will be announced later.

The program for spring wheat is the same as for winter wheat. The main points are:

- A mandatory cut of 10 percent from acreage based on national allotment of 55,000,000 acres to avoid marketing quota penalty.
- Voluntary acreage diversion in addition.

● Payments for both the mandatory and voluntary diversion of wheat acreage to soil conserving uses based on yields and support prices.

- Price support to cooperators.

Those who participate may pasture acreage to be diverted until May 1 under both the wheat and feed grain programs. The acreage to be diverted will be designated by those in the program at the time a check is made of compliance. Compliance checks are now being made on the fall-seeded crop acreage signed up.

USDA officials report headway toward achieving a more realistic relationship between supplies and needs in the important grain sector of agriculture. Under the 1961 feed grain program production of feed grains was brought below utilization in 1961 for the first time since 1952, even though crop conditions were excellent.

Signup to date for the fall seeded crops of wheat and barley shows a potential reduction of a substantial acreage in these two crops from 1961 levels. Winter wheat acreage signed up for diversion amounts to about 11.2 million acres, which is equal to about 25 percent of 1961 winter wheat plantings of approximately 43.2 million acres. Even more significant, according to Department officials, is the fact that acreage diversion indicated in a major five-State hard red winter wheat producing area is equal to about 26.5 percent of the area's 1961 plantings. This area produced 50 percent of the total U.S. wheat crop in 1961 and 80 percent of the hard red winter production. More than 80 percent of the U.S. wheat carryover is hard red winter wheat.

Fall-seeded barley acreage signed for diversion amounts to about 1.2 million acres, which is about 23 percent of estimated 1961 fall barley plantings of 5.2 million acres.



OUR FOREIGN TRADE IN FRUIT

The total value of U.S. exports of fruit more than doubled during the last decade. Most of the increase occurred in fresh fruit and in canned and frozen products. The leading destinations for our fruit exports were Canada and Western Europe.

The U.S. fruit and nut exports during the 1960-61 fiscal year were valued at \$261 million. Fresh fruit accounted for \$103 million, processed \$147 million, and tree nuts and fruit preparations \$11 million. Volume of all fruits and preparations was up about one-third during the decade.

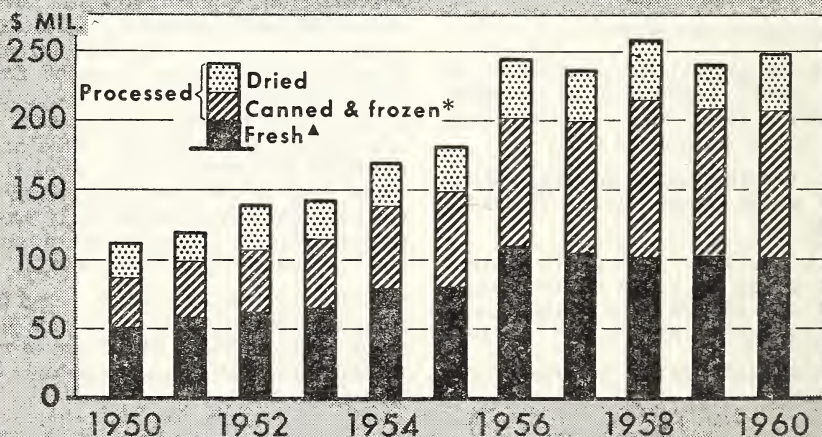
It is generally true that the United States exports only about 10 percent of its output of fresh fruits as compared with countries like Australia and South Africa, which export around 75 percent. Because of this, it might seem that foreign trade would be relatively unimportant to the U.S. fruit producer or shipper.

This trade, however, is significant, as evidenced over the period since World War II, when many foreign markets were closed to U.S. fruit. When the production of a commodity closely approximates its level of use by the domestic market (true of many U.S. fruit items) a relatively small increase or decrease in the available supply for the market or in available outlets is felt by all producers of the commodity.

The U.S. producers benefit through an expanded market when other nations lower their import barriers. The United States maintains its best markets in the countries which have relaxed import restrictions the most—for deciduous fruits, the United Kingdom, Sweden, and the Netherlands; for citrus fruits, the Benelux Union, West Germany, and the United Kingdom (principal offshore markets). Canada, however, is the best foreign customer for fruits.

Robert S. FitzSimmonds
Foreign Agricultural Service

VALUE OF FRUIT EXPORTS



*INCLUDES FRUIT PREPARATIONS

▲ NOT INCLUDING MELONS

outlook



CATTLE

On October 1, eight percent more cattle and calves were on feed than a year ago. Feeders plan to market a larger than usual share of their animals after the beginning of 1962. Thus, fed-cattle prices are likely to average slightly lower in the first few months of 1962 than in the same period of 1961.

HOGS

Hog marketings this winter should continue a little above last winter's levels with slaughter coming mainly from early fall farrowings. Prices should rise seasonally during early winter but will probably continue below the same period last year.

SHEEP



A strong seasonal price rise for sheep and lamb from early December levels is in prospect for the next few months. In 7 major feeding States, 6 percent less sheep and lambs were on feed this November than last. Furthermore, a smaller lamb crop is in prospect for 1962 than in 1961.

BROILERS

Cutbacks in hatchery and slaughter activities have recently occurred in the broiler industry. They indicate a reduction in supplies over the next 3 months to about year-earlier levels. Broiler prices have strengthened some-

what since mid-November, reflecting the cutbacks. In southern producing areas, growers received around 15 cents per pound in early January—somewhat above a year ago.

EGGS



Egg output since July has averaged above 1960 levels. In the first half of 1962, production is expected to continue large, and above a year earlier because of an expected gain from last year in eggs per layer followed by some expansion in the total number of layers in the second quarter of 1962. Prices in the first quarter will likely average below a year earlier.

SOYBEANS

The soybean supply for 1961-62 is estimated at 699 million bushels, up 120 million bushels from last year. Crushings are forecast at a record 425 million bushels—about 6 percent above last year's crush. Exports are expected around 170 million bushels, up about one-third from 1960-61. This would result in a carryover of 65 million bushels on September 30, 1962. Factors pointing to increased exports are: Major importing areas such as Japan and Western Europe continue to need large imports of oilseeds; the exportable supplies from Red China continue small; and less Philippine copra and coconut oil will move in world trade.

continued



DAIRY



Milk production in 1961 totalled about 2 billion pounds more than the 122.9 billion pounds of 1960, marking the largest year-to-year gain since 1953. These factors have contributed to the uptrend: (1) Milk-feed price relationships have continued favorable for several years, and beef cattle prices have declined a little from their 1959 high. (2) Rise in manufacturing milk prices in late 1960 and through the first three quarters of 1961.

FEED

Feed grain prices dipped 5 percent from October to November as corn prices fell seasonally with the harvesting of the 1961 crop. However, farmers' prices in November averaged 11 percent higher than a year earlier with prices of each of the four feed grains above November 1960 levels.

WHEAT



Incomplete reports through December 1 indicate that winter wheat growers agreed to divert 11.2 million acres under the 1962 Wheat Stabilization Program. This represents 34 percent of the 32.4 million acres eligible on the signed farms. Total acreage planted to wheat in 1961 was 55.6 million acres. Sign-up in the spring wheat producing areas will begin February 5.

TOBACCO

Cigarette consumption and output in 1961 set new records for the fifth year

in a row. The year will also probably mark a long time high in the consumption of cigars (including cigarillos)—the highest consumption since 1923. Further gains in cigars and cigarettes are in prospect for 1962.

WOOL

World wool prices rose moderately in late November and early December from the relatively stable level of early fall. Auction demand for wool continues strong in Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa, where 1961-62 wool production is near record-high levels. Sales activity is expected to increase in Argentina and Uruguay as wool moves into the central markets.

COTTON



The carryover of cotton on August 1, 1962, is expected to be about 7.4 million bales, about 0.2 million bales larger than last year. The anticipated increase is a result of expected smaller exports in 1961-62 than in 1960-61.

POTATOES

Materially more potatoes will be available this winter than last. The fall potato crop, at 201 million hundredweight, was 15 percent larger than last year. Prospective production of winter potatoes in Florida and California at 4.2 million hundredweight is down 16 percent from last winter.

CITRUS FRUITS

Early-season marketings of Florida citrus fruits have been considerably larger, and grower prices have averaged somewhat lower, this fall than last. However, in California, where supplies of oranges have been lighter, prices for the larger-sized oranges averaged somewhat higher in early December than a year earlier. Except for California oranges and Florida tangerines, supplies of fresh citrus fruits are expected to continue larger this winter than in the season of 1961.

THE CHANGING PATTERN IN HIRED FARM LABOR

Each year fewer and fewer workers (farm operators, their families, and hired workers) produce our Nation's food and fiber, and this trend is likely to continue for some time to come. Over the past 10 years this force has declined by one-fourth.

Part of the decline can be explained by the decrease in the number of farms, and part is due to the fact that there are fewer workers per farm. In 1940 there were 1.5 workers per farm, but by the late fifties the number was down to about 1.25 per farm.

All segments of the farm labor force are not declining. There has been no recent drop in the number of hired farm workers. Actually, there has been an increase since the end of World War II. During the 1945-47 period, an average of 3.1 million different persons (14 years of age and over) were doing farm wage work each year, while during the last 3 years an average of 3.8 million different persons

(not including temporary foreign workers) have done farm wage work at some time during the year.

This is not the whole story, either. There are about 5 percent more casual workers (those who do less than 25 days of farm wage work per year) now than in 1945, but these workers account for only 3 or 4 percent of the man-days of farm wage work in any given year. The year-round workers (250 days or more) still do almost half the man-days of work although they make up only a little over 10 percent of all farm wage workers. Seasonal (25-149 days) and regular (150-249 days) workers now account for almost 40 percent of the man-days, while in 1945 these workers were doing only about one-third of the total man-days of farm wage work. This points up the trend toward the increased use of short-term workers during peak harvest seasons.

Robert R. Stansberry, Jr.
Economic Research Service

Fewer Farmworkers Supply More People



1940



1950



1960

THE WORLD FOOD SUPPLY . . .

Is Mankind Winning the War With Hunger?

One-third of the world is free from fear of hunger for the first time in history. In the other two-thirds, chronic malnutrition continues to be a persistent and debilitating enemy.

For the most part, the industrialized countries of the northern half of the globe, plus Australia and New Zealand, now produce or can afford to buy the foods they need. Despite ever increasing populations, these nations have the technology, economic plant, capital, and dynamism to maintain their present favorable food balances permanently with the resources they have.

Over 900 million people share the benefits of 200 years of industrial and agricultural revolution in Western Europe. They benefit too from the development of Canada, the United States, Australia, and New Zealand as major food producers and exporters.

Since World War II, greatly expanded production of food or negotiable goods in Eastern Europe and Japan is another factor contributing to man's unprecedented victory over hunger.

At present, the remarkable advance in the northern half of the world is more than counter-balanced by chronic malnutrition in the southern half.

The food deficit area includes Latin America, Africa, West Asia, Communist Asia, and the non-Communist Far East. A few countries in these areas are exceptions in that their diets are nutritionally adequate on a national basis.

Some 2 billion people live in this largely tropical or semitropical Southern area, mostly on lands made poor by centuries of use without fertilizers. Subsistence farming is widespread. Farms are small. Most of the work is done by hand, and yields per acre are low. Where commercial farming exists, it is often a one-crop economy exposed to world market fluctuations.

Personal income reflects these conditions. Average annual income per

capita varies from a high of \$235 in Latin America to a low of \$62 in Communist Asia, far below the \$843 average in the North.

As it turns out, the people who cannot produce the foods they need for a balanced diet cannot buy them either. They fall prey to endemic disease, bloat, and persistent fatigue.

Food-deficit countries are plagued by other social and economic handicaps—illiteracy, poor health facilities, inadequate transportation and communication systems, limited marketing facilities, and a critical need for industrial development and higher foreign exchange earnings.

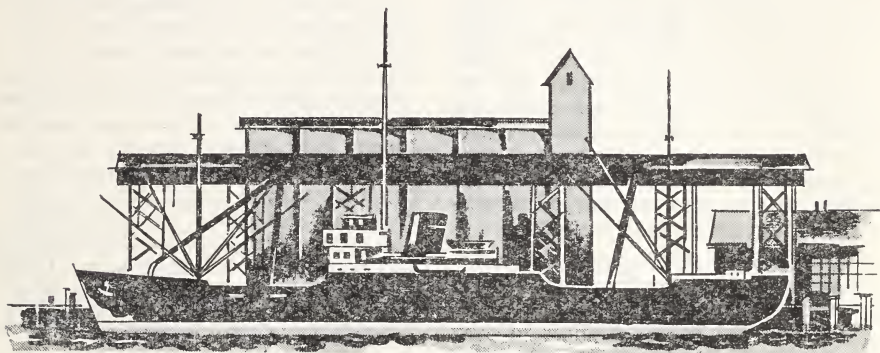
In a report entitled "The World Food Budget" the Economic Research Service balances world food production and trade against population trends and expected consumption. The report makes projections for 1962 and 1966. Food deficits are shown in terms of various proteins, fat, and total calories needed. Because people around the world eat so many different foods, these deficits in turn are expressed in terms of four widely used commodities.

In 1962 the world deficit in animal protein will equal 1.5 million metric tons of *nonfat dry milk*, or about one-fourth present U.S. production of fluid milk. Pulse protein will fall short by 150,000 tons of *dry beans and peas*, about one-fifth U.S. production. A fat shortage equal to 3 million tons of *vegetable oil* represents three-fourths U.S. output, while other protein and calorie deficits equal 29 million tons of *wheat*, or nine-tenths U.S. output.

The most severe food shortages are in Communist Asia and the non-Communist Far East. Here one-half of the world's total population struggles to subsist on one-fourth of the world's arable land. Under these conditions, it is easy to see why the Far East shows two-thirds of the total wheat shortage projected for the entire Southern area in 1962, and nearly one-half of the animal and pulse protein shortage. Simi-

(Continued on page 10)

FOREIGN MARKET PROSPECTS LOOK GOOD FOR '62



Another good year is in prospect for U.S. agricultural exports in 1961-62 (year ending June 30, 1962). The value of exports is expected to total \$5.1 billion, slightly above the \$4.9 billion for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1961, although part of the increase in value will reflect higher export prices for cotton and certain grains. Volume also is expected to set a new record in 1961-62.

By commodities, gains are expected in wheat and flour, soybeans, vegetable oils, fruits, vegetables, and animal products. Exports of feed grains will probably show little change, and moderate declines are expected in cotton, rice, and tobacco.

U.S. exports of wheat (including flour) are expected to be above last year's record of 662 million bushels. A new high of 675 million bushels is presently estimated for the current fiscal year. Wheat production in Western Europe was about 100 million bushels lower in 1961 than for the previous year, and the area will have to import substantially more wheat in the current season to make up for its reduced production. The United States is expected to share in the larger exports to this area. U.S. wheat exports under Government programs (Public Law 480 and Public Law 665) will likely continue at about last year's

record level, with the bulk of the shipments going to Asia.

Exports of oilseeds and products, including large quantities of oils for overseas donation, are estimated to be about 20 percent above last year's \$603 million, with increases occurring in soybeans, vegetable oils, and protein meal. Continued relatively small exports of soybeans from Communist China will be a principal factor contributing to the increased demand for U.S. soybeans and meal. U.S. exports of edible oils will be helped by smaller olive oil crops in the key countries of Spain and Italy, as well as reduced exports of Philippine copra. A strong demand for protein meal for feed in Europe will encourage exports.

Exports of fruits and vegetables are likely to be moderately above the level of a year earlier. The smaller production of deciduous fruits in Europe is expected to stimulate U.S. exports of fruits to this area. Also, exports of fresh and processed vegetables are expected to increase slightly this year.

Exports of animal products in 1961-62 may be somewhat above last year's \$618 million. Increases are expected in hides and skins, poultry meat, and variety meats—all of which scored new records in 1960-61. While the export volume of animal fats and dairy products is expected to increase, the value

of these commodities is likely to decline because of lower average export prices. Large exportable supplies along with lower prices will encourage exports of most animal products in 1961-62.

Feed grain exports will likely total 12.5 million tons in 1961-62, near the high average of the past three years. In recent years, Western Europe has taken about three-fourths of U.S. exports of feed grains. These exports will continue to benefit from the steady growth in the livestock industry there. A limiting factor on any further gain in feed grain exports this year is the substantial increase in European production, particularly in France.

Cotton exports are likely to be down approximately a million bales from 1960-61 shipments of 7 million bales, which was the second highest in over a quarter of a century. Increased dependence on previously accumulated inventories abroad is the major factor in the decline.

Rice exports in 1961-62 may be lower than those of the past 2 years but above the 1955-59 average. Exports this year are likely to total 19-20 million bags (milled basis) compared with 21.6 million a year earlier. The reduction will be in exports under Government programs (Public Law 480 and Public Law 665) as dollar exports are expected to continue at the level of last year. The main development in the decline is the continuing reduction in U.S. carryover stocks which has occurred since August 1, 1956. August 1 stocks in 1961 were 15.5 million bags (milled basis) less than in 1956.

Meanwhile, unmanufactured tobacco exports will probably be slightly below last year's 504 million pounds because of increased competition from expanding production abroad, improved foreign stock positions, and the continued existence of trade barriers.

Robert L. Tontz
Economic Research Service

The Farmer's Share

The farmer's share of the consumer's food dollar was 38 cents again in October 1961, the same as it was in September. In October 1960 the farmer's share was 39 cents.

World Food Supply—Continued

larly, about one-half of the shortage in animal protein and fat and about 3 million tons of the wheat shortage is in Communist Asia.

The Far East, excluding Communist Asia, expects a population increase in the next 10 years of nearly 200 million, more than the present population of the entire United States. Yet the area has little unused arable land that could be cultivated to relieve this pressure on the food supply. Lands now under cultivation will have to be made more productive by a much greater use of chemical fertilizers, the construction and improvement of irrigation, and the general adoption of other better farming practices, including the use of improved seeds that will respond to fertilizer.

For both 1962 and 1966, Africa, West Asia, and Latin America also show substantial shortages of wheat. In West Asia and Latin America, consumption of animal and pulse protein will be adequate, and the fat shortage small. The shortages for all three nutrients in Africa will be minor.

All three regions could raise yields per acre by more extensive use of chemical fertilizers in combination with other approved farming practices. In Africa and Latin America much unused land could also be cultivated to expand the agricultural land base. In addition, both West Asia and Latin America would benefit from land reform programs; a more equitable distribution among small farmers of lands now retained in vast feudal tracts would go far toward increasing their desire to produce more.

Complex but clearly defined problems underlie the Southern area's inadequate production of food—poor yields per acre caused by primitive tillage practices and low soil fertility, too little land per person, plus pitifully low personal income due to lagging economic and industrial development.

The deficit countries, of course, must take the initiative in solving these manifold problems. The United States and other food-plus nations can only assist.

Wilhelm Anderson
Economic Research Service

RURAL AMERICA HAS A STAKE IN METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT

The rural United States is feeling the effects of the population explosion from spawning American cities. Much farmland is being put to new urban uses, and remaining farms are in the midst of problems caused by the urbanization going on around them. Problems are arising beyond the control of both traditional urban and rural governments.

Today farm people and other rural residents should take an active role in keeping long-term pollution, flood, health, traffic, safety, and public finance problems to a minimum. Past experience indicates that too often they do too little too late, because existing local governments are seldom organized to cope with the responsibilities brought on by an increased population.

Let's take a look at some of the proposals for changes in local government organizations in our metropolitan areas which could benefit the rural resident.

● *City-County Consolidations:* As the name implies, proposals for city-county consolidation would combine city and county into a single unit of government. All local government activities formerly undertaken by cities and the county would be performed by this unit. Areawide services, such as the recording of real estate transactions and the assessment of property, would be continued by the city-county. More distinctly urban services such as water and sewer systems would be provided only in the urban areas. The arrangement can provide for a different level of services in urban and rural areas and permit different levels of property taxation in these two areas.

● *The Urban County:* In general, urban county proposals provide the county with the kind of municipal powers and corporate identity usually provided to cities, and permit the county government to undertake a wide range of urban government activities. They also provide for some changes in the administrative structure of the county.

If there is an elected county executive, the county is provided with an executive head similar to a strong mayor or the President of the United States.

One of the chief arguments for urban counties is that they make use of an existing unit of government, to which is assigned authority to deal with pressing problems. Usually the county is large enough to deal with metropolitanwide problems.

● *The Metropolitan Multipurpose District:* The metropolitan multipurpose district is a special district covering the entire metropolitan area and authorized to undertake a number of activities. It is a unit of government entirely separate from counties, cities, and other local governments. The kinds of activities assigned to special districts usually include such things as water and sewer service, rapid transit service, operation of ports and airports, areawide planning and zoning, and control of air pollution.

● *Federation:* Proposals for a metropolitan federation envision a two-level system of government similar to that in our Federal system. The metropolitan federation consists of a number of local governments performing local functions and a metropolitan government performing areawide functions.

Among the functions that may be assigned to the metropolitan government are mass transit, major streets and highways, planning, water and sewer systems, port facilities, the major park and public beach system, hospitals and welfare services, and assessment and collection of taxes. The cities retain the local portions of many of the functions. In addition, the metropolitan government is responsible for traditional functions in the rural portions of the county.

One of the advantages of the federation is that it provides internal flexibility in that it permits a shift of some duties from the smaller units of government to the metropolitan gov-

ernment and vice versa. The county government can set minimum standards for the services performed by the cities. If the standards are not met, it may take over and perform the services. The county also may perform the services if requested to do so by the municipality.

● *Regional Cooperation:* Proposals for regional cooperation of local governments in a metropolitan area can vary greatly in detail, but their basic framework is the regular, voluntary meeting of representatives of the local governments to discuss mutual problems. The cooperating governments may include cities and counties, or in some instances, counties only.

The name applied to these gatherings varies. They are often called the regional council or regional cooperative committee. Usually, the larger cities and counties have one representative on the cooperative council, while the smaller units of government are assigned to groupings, each of which is entitled to a representative on the council. So far as any governmental action results from the work of the

council, it comes from agreement on the part of individual cities and counties to take the action suggested by the committee. The suggestions of the council are not legally binding on any of the participating local governments.

Rural residents will find both advantages and disadvantages in each of these five proposals for metropolitan government reorganization. The one most useful to a particular area may well depend upon local conditions in the area. Some of these proposals can be combined to meet a particular local situation.

Specialists in local government agree, however, that any one of the five proposals reviewed here would be an improvement over the existing system of government in most of our metropolitan areas. Imperfect as they are, they would be more responsible and responsive, would have more adequate fiscal bases, and would be more effective than the fragmented local governments that now exist in many of our metropolitan areas.

C. J. Hein
Economic Research Service



VEGETABLES . . .

1962 Spring Acreage Marketing Guides

USDA's acreage-marketing guides recommend a 3-percent increase in acreage for 1962 spring-crop vegetables and a 6-percent increase in 1962 spring melon acreage. Spring potato growers are urged to cut plantings by 8 percent.

The guides cover 16 major spring vegetables as well as spring cantaloups, watermelons, and potatoes that will be marketed during April, May, and June of 1962.

The guides are designed to help growers avoid marketing difficulties. They provide growers not only with specific recommendations, but also with the information on which the recommenda-

tions are based. By helping growers appraise potential markets, this information serves as a foundation on which growers can frame a sound production schedule for the forthcoming season.

The planting guides for each crop are presented in terms of percentage changes from the acreages planted in the preceding year. In this way each grower can apply the recommendations to his own operation.

If you want a free copy of the guides see your county agent or drop us a card. Our address: Agricultural Situation, MOS, USDA, Washington 25, D.C.

SPRING PIG CROP LARGER AGAIN

Reports based on farmers' intentions indicate 7.3 million sows to farrow in the spring of 1962 (December 1961–May 1962). This is 3 percent more than in the spring of 1961 and 7 percent above the spring of 1960. If these intentions materialize, and if the number of pigs saved per litter should equal the 1950–59 average, with an allowance for trend, the 1962 spring pig crop would total 51.5 million head, 2 percent above the 1961 spring crop.

The increased spring pig crop results from a 2-percent increase in the East North Central States, a 5-percent increase in the West North Central, and a 4-percent increase in the South Atlantic States. The North Atlantic region reported a 6-percent decrease in intentions, the South Central a 2-percent decrease, and the West a 5-percent decrease.

Pigs Saved 1961

The 1961 pig crop totaled 93.2 million head, an increase of 5 percent from 1960. The 10-year annual average is 91.7 million pigs. The 1961 spring pig crop totaled 50.5 million head, and the fall crop was 42.7 million head.

The 1961 spring pig crop (December 1960–May 1961) at 50.5 million head was 7 percent larger than in 1960. The number of sows which farrowed, 7.0 million, was 4 percent larger than in 1960. A record 7.18 pigs saved per litter was 3 percent larger than the 6.96 averaged for the spring of 1960. The average litter size was larger in all regions except in the North Atlantic where the 1961 average was the same as for 1960.

The 1961 fall crop of 42.7 million head was 4 percent larger than in the fall of 1960. The 6.0 million sows which farrowed was 2 percent above 1960 fall total. All regions reported larger litters in the fall of 1961 than a year earlier, and the average number of pigs saved per litter at 7.15 was 2 percent larger than a year earlier.

Selected States

In 10 selected Corn Belt States, 1961 fall litters and expected 1962 spring farrowings both showed small percentage gains from a year earlier. In these States—Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Kansas—the number of sows that farrowed during the June–November 1961 period totaled 4,474,000, an increase of 3 percent over 1960. Farmers' intentions point to 5,667,000 spring litters during the December 1961–May 1962 period, a gain of 4 percent over 1961. The gains in farrowings were well distributed among the several Corn Belt States, with fall farrowings increased in 8 of the 10 States, and spring farrowings expected to be up in 9 States.

Quarterly farrowing data for the Corn Belt States show rather uniform percentage increases in sows farrowing. The 2,308,000 farrowings during the June–August period were up 3 percent from a year earlier, and the 2,166,000 farrowings during the September–November quarter were up 4 percent. Expected farrowings for the December–February period at 1,878,000 are up 6 percent, and the 3,789,000 forecast for the March–May quarter is up 3 percent.

Hogs Up (10 States)

The number of all hogs and pigs on farms in the 10 selected Corn Belt States on December 1, 1961, totaled 47,630,000, up 5 percent from a year earlier but 2 percent less than 2 years ago. For individual States, gains from a year earlier ranged from as little as 2 percent in Minnesota and Missouri to as much as 13 percent in Kansas.

Age classification of hogs on hand showed 15,448,000 pigs under 3 months, 15,407,000 hogs and pigs 3 to 6 months of age, and 16,775,000 hogs over 6 months. Increases in numbers from a year earlier were 4 percent for pigs under 3 months, 5 percent for those 3 to 6 months, and 7 percent for hogs 6 months old and over.

R. P. Christeson
Statistical Reporting Service

FLAX SUPPLY DOWN—PRICES UP

The flaxseed supply (1961-62 crop year) for the United States is placed at 27 million bushels as compared with 33 million bushels for 1960-61. Both acreage harvested and yields were down sharply.

Flaxseed crushings are expected to total 19 million bushels for the 1961-62 marketing year, slightly less than last year. This compares with a 1950-59 average of 29.1 million bushels.

Eight million bushels are left for exports, seed, and carryover. Of this amount 2 million bushels are expected to find their way into export, and another 2 million will be needed to seed the 1962 crop. These demand estimates indicate carryover stocks on July 1, 1962, will be around 4 million bushels, down slightly from the year before.

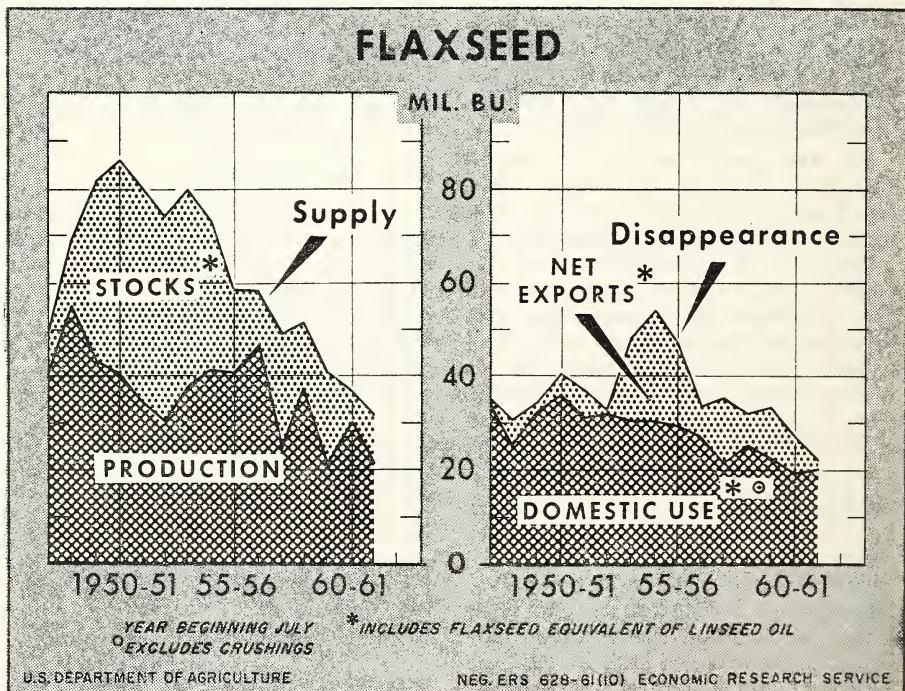
Present indications are that exportable supplies of flaxseed (including the seed equivalent of linseed oil) from the

1961 crops in foreign countries may be down substantially from the 55 million bushels of last year. The three major exporting countries are the United States, Canada, and Argentina.

The season average price received by farmers for 1961 crop flaxseed was \$3.24 per bushel, 44 cents above the 1961 support rate and compares with \$2.65 the previous year. These higher prices result not only from the tight domestic situation but also stem in part from the short world supply.

Prices of linseed oil (raw, tank cars, Minneapolis) during 1961-62 are expected to average about 15 cents per pound compared with 13 cents for 1960-61. This higher price will be a factor in keeping the consumption of linseed oil on its downward trend as users of drying oils substitute lower-priced formulations for their needs insofar as possible.

Stanley A. Gazelle
Economic Research Service



"Bert" Newell's

Letter

I was sure it would happen. The only thing I missed was the timing factor.

Now I am not trying to minimize my error because timing is all-important in a lot of things. A few years ago I was watching a couple of pugs in a square circle. One of the guys (actually, he was much the best boxer) got so sure of himself that he began clowning around and was just a wee bit late in ducking. It was just a very little error in timing, but he hit the floor about 6 feet from where he had been standing, and that was that. The referee counted the required 10, but he could have counted a hundred; it wouldn't have made any difference.

Of course, the results of errors in timing are not always quite that dramatic, but it's always dangerous to overlook such details. Take our work here on the Crop Reporting Board where the day and exact time of each release are set up a year ahead of time. If we miss that release by even a few seconds, we might not catch a haymaker, but, believe me, we would hear about it.

But the timing error that I made wasn't when to duck or on the release time of a report. What I missed was how soon I would get a reaction to that letter I wrote about planting on the phases of the moon and water dowsing.

OK, fellows, I'll admit there are good examples of success from both planting on the phases of the moon and finding water with a forked stick. My friend from South Carolina said he thought a lot might depend on the particular individual who used the dowsing rod and his ability to locate a water vein, but he couldn't believe the story about the fellow who dowsed water on the Island of Bermuda by remote control from Kennebunkport, Maine. Neither can I.

Furthermore, I'll go along with the fellow who said, "You don't have to be a mathematical statistician to estimate

or forecast the yield of a crop." We have fellows right here in Ag Estimates that can leave their slide rules at home and go through a cornfield or wheat-field and come powerful close to giving you the yield. Some can do the same thing with potatoes, and one famous alumnus of our staff could estimate the yield of an onion field so close, he was known in onion-producing areas all over the country.

We make very extensive use of this knowledge and ability on the part of our own statisticians, and depend heavily upon the same kind of knowledge and judgment of our cooperative crop and livestock reporters. We just couldn't get along without farm reporters.

What I meant when I said we were thankful we had more scientific methods to depend on in estimating crops was the technical knowledge of our staff in designing and interpreting sample material. Of course, you know that we do not get reports from every farm, but, rather, have to depend on getting enough reports from representative farms in all parts of the State to be able to expand this sample to a total for the State. This is pretty specialized business that requires quite a lot of technical training.

The State statistician and his staff have to know how to handle this sort of statistics in addition to the ability to make independent appraisal and judgments on the individual crops he observes as he travels throughout the State.

Well, I guess it comes down to this. Crop and livestock estimating and forecasting work for this big country of ours is a complicated job. We have to use all the science possible, and our men have to be technically trained to use these techniques properly. On the other hand, we are sure we do a better job by having men who know agriculture thoroughly and how to employ some methods that may be just a wee bit like the "science" used in water dowsing and planting on the phases of the moon.



S. R. Newell
Chairman, Crop Reporting Board, SRS



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